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U. S. CONGRESS.—In the Senate, yesterday, resolutions by the Legislature of California affirming the uncompromising "loyalty" of that State, declaring the war is one between "a slaveholding aristocracy and free government," and denouncing "Copperhead" members of Congress were presented by Mr. Conness. A bill to repeal the joint resolution providing for the transfer of seamen from the military to the naval service, was introduced by Mr. Grimes, and referred to the Naval Committee. The joint resolution to amend the Constitution so as to abolish slavery came up; various amendments were offered and rejected, and, finally, the resolution, as reported by the Judiciary Committee, amending the Constitution so as to abolish slavery, was adopted in Committee of the Whole. A proposition was then made to put the bill on its passage, but further action was postponed until to-day.

In the House of Representatives the bill providing that the heads of Departments may occupy seats on the floor of the House, was ordered to be printed. The consideration of the National Bank bill was resumed, the question being on agreeing to the amendments as reported from the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Stevens moved to lay the bill on the table, which was carried by a vote of 89 yeas to 44 nays.

In Boston, yesterday morning before day, a fire broke out in the Freemasons' Hall, which together with the Winthrop House, in the same block, was totally destroyed. Loss \$300,000. Only the walls of the Freemason's Hall and Winthrop House remain standing. All the guests of the hotel escaped, but very little property was saved. Mr. Silsby, proprietor of the Winthrop House, loses about \$50,000 in furniture and fixtures.

It was stated a few days ago that Col. Wm. Chestnut, of Baltimore had been arrested, at the request of Gen. Butler, and was subsequently released on parole by General Wallace. On Monday the matter was finally settled by Gen. Wallace issuing a special general order, honorably releasing Col. Chestnut from the obligations of his parole, and stating that the arrest was brought about by misapprehension, &c.

A London letter says: "At the Thackeray sales the prices realized were enormous, particularly for the plate and china. Thackeray had a strong taste for such brick-a-brac, and had a habit of dropping in at certain favorite shops and resisting, or oftener yielding, to the temptation of some quaint set of apostle spoons, some good bit of Rococo silver, or some tempting little 'piece' of Marcolini, Dresden, or old Sevres; and now the bargains he thought so reckless often have turned out wonderfully profitable."

FOREIGN NEWS.—The Persia, at New York brings European advices to the 27th ult. The London Shipping Gazette's Paris correspondent says that the finance ministers had an interview Friday afternoon, with Mr. Glynn, respecting the Mexican loan, and that in the evening a gentleman of the financial department was to leave for Miramar, to obtain Maximilian's signature to the degree. The Confederate steamer Georgia arrived at Bordeaux on the 25th of March. The Times editorially contends that the Federal armies will this year be made subservient to electioneering purposes rather than the object of war. It is reported that Queen Victoria will shortly emerge from seclusion by shortly holding two State receptions. A mass meeting at Blackheath, near London, has adopted resolutions in favor of English intervention in behalf of Poland.—The Bank of France has reduced its discount to six per cent. It is reported that great coolness has arisen between Russia and France, the former having acquired the conviction that France is plotting mischief in European Turkey.

The following, says an English paper, is an extract of a letter just received from Melbourne: "Prof. Newager, on a three years' scientific visit from Bavaria, tells us that in 1865 a comet shall come so close as to endanger this our earth, and should it not attach itself, (as one globule of quicksilver to another, nor annihilate us, the sight will be most beautiful to behold. During three nights we shall have no darkness, but be bathed in the brilliant light of the blazing train." Prof. N. is no doubt, a "reliable gentleman."

Shortly after five o'clock on Monday afternoon a party of returned soldiers, while in the vicinity of Foundry and Davis streets, (Baltimore,) observed five negro soldiers passing up the latter street, and immediately attacked them. The negroes endeavored to effect their escape, but were pursued by the soldiers, some of whom discharged pistols at them, but without effect. Four of the soldiers were arrested and committed to jail.

The New York News says: "We learn, upon good authority, that Fort LaFayette is over-run with rats of gigantic size and intense fierceness. As the unfortunate prisoners lie in their uncomfortable cribs at night, they are literally covered with the disgusting vermin.—We have heard of one case in which the unhappy occupant of one of the cells was aroused, as by a nightmare, to find six of them reveling upon his breast, and of another who felt something nibbling at his pedal extremities, and instinctively kicking, a rat was thrown to the ceiling and fell with a thud upon the floor."

An official document, dated Imperial Palace at Mexico, Department of Foreign affairs, March 4, 1864, states that the regency of the Empire having been informed that certain persons coming from ports on the Pacific, have taken possession of lands in Mexico under contracts made with President Juarez, announces that all such contracts are void and of no effect.

"One of the Presbyterians" thus replies, in the "Virginia State Journal" to "Episcopalian No. 2," on Christ Church affairs:—"I am one of the Presbyterians arraigned by the author of Hudibras and the article in question, and accused of being aiders and abettors of strife.—I have attended Christ Church for more than a year past, and during that time have never exchanged an unkind word with any member of the congregation. I have participated in no intrigues, nor have I, at any time, indulged in language such as is so grossly characterized by "Episcopalian No. 2." I attended the meetings in question, and, as it was my right, took part in the discussion of the questions which came before the meeting—in a manner, I hope, which became the place and the occasion. I spoke for, and acted with, "Episcopalian No. 2," when I thought he was right; I opposed him when I thought he was wrong. This is the extent of my offending. The vexed questions were all disposed of by the action of the congregation; and I hope peace and prosperity will be the future of Christ Church. There does not seem to me to be any necessity for the interference of the military, nor for the closing of the Church."

A Washington dispatch to the New York Evening Post states that "Secretary Seward has addressed a letter to Mr. Washburne, Chairman of the House Select Committee on Emigration, recommending the passage of a law to encourage emigration. He proposes to advance to indigent emigrants sufficient money to cover the expense of ocean transit, and sends to the committee the draft of a bill to carry out the plan. The bill provides for the appointment of a Commissioner of Emigration with three clerks, and pledges the labor of the emigrant for the repayment of the loan. It also authorizes a reduction of the tonnage duties upon emigrant ships, and requires but one year for the naturalization of emigrants.—The bill will be reported to the House by Mr. Grinnell, of Iowa."

The British ship Saltana, from Newport, Wales, with a cargo of sugar and melado, and the brig Hannah, last from Nassau, with Spaulding & Rogers' circus company on board, and all bound to New York, were all wrecked during the late gale on the New Jersey beach near Barnegat.

At Philadelphia, yesterday, a large boiler at Merrick & Son's Southwark Foundry, exploded, causing much loss of life and great destruction of property. Five workmen were killed, and over thirty wounded by the explosion.

In accordance with Judge Advocate Holt's opinion in the premises, wherein he advises that the President of the U. S. should retain the power to summarily dismiss officers of the army and navy, the Senate Military Committee have reported adversely to the bill taking from the President such power.

The Earl of Aberdeen, formerly prominent in British politics; and Lord Ashburton (son of Lord Ashburton who made with Mr. Webster the North Eastern boundary treaty) died lately in England.